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C O N F I D E N T I A L WARSAW 002479

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TAGS: [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [UNSC](#) [MOPS](#) [MARR](#) [PL](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: POLAND-IRAQ: GOP PREPARING TO CONFIRM TROOP
PRESENCE THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2007

REF: A. WARSAW 2433

[B](#). STATE 188677

[C](#). STATE 188249

Classified By: Political Counselor Mary Curtin, reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

[1](#). (C) SUMMARY. Senior MFA officials stated privately that the Council of Ministers would shortly forward to President Kaczynski a decision extending the Polish deployment to Iraq through December 31, 2007, consistent with the newly passed UNSCR 1723, while MOD and the General Staff confirmed planning for deployments at current levels in 2007. In response to a leaked memo from DefMin Sikorski recommending that Poland withdraw from Iraq in July 2007, President Lech Kaczynski reconfirmed publicly November 27 that Poland will fulfill its commitments to Iraq and stay to the end of 2007. Nonetheless, the level of "semi-public" debate and anxiety over Iraq deployments continues to rise. END SUMMARY.

[2](#). (U) The Polish edition of Newsweek published November 27 a leaked memo from DefMin Radek Sikorski to President Lech Kaczynski that recommended Poland withdraw from Iraq in July 2007 at the end of the next six-month rotation of troops to the Polish-led Multi-National Division Center South (MND-CS). The memo, dated October 24, asserted that the MND-CS had accomplished its mission and would be able to hand over full responsibility for its sector to Iraqi security forces and argued that the Iraq mission should be discontinued in light of Poland's increased troop commitments in Afghanistan, Lebanon and elsewhere. Although Newsweek's front page story created a brief furor, President Lech Kaczynski quickly issued a statement reconfirming his consistent public position since meeting President Bush in Washington in January 2007, that Polish troops would remain in Iraq through [2007](#).

[3](#). (C) Amb. Krzysztof Plominski, Acting Director of the MFA Middle East Africa Department, called in PolExt Chief to provide an update on Poland's Iraq policy and similarly rebut the Newsweek story. Plominski shared the instructions he had sent to Polish Amb. Janusz Reiter in Washington for the November 29 "Iraqi Forum," which included the clear message that Poland would stay in Iraq in 2007. With UNSCR 1723 now passed and a letter received from Iraqi National Security Adviser Rubai on November 27 explicitly requesting that Polish troops remain in Iraq, the last remaining procedural requirements for a government decision on troop extension (Ref A) had been fulfilled.

[4](#). (C) Plominski said that the MFA expected the Council of Ministers to approve and forward to President Kaczynski for signature in the next two weeks a decision extending the Polish deployment until December 2007, consistent with the new mandate under UNSCR 1723 and the request contained in

Rubai's letter - which was consistent with the request from Iraqi PM al Maliki to the UN Security Council (Ref C). Plominski was unable to provide details on numbers and tasks of the next Polish rotation that was due to arrive in January 2007. However, MOD and General Staff officials have confirmed separately to USDAO Warsaw that they are preparing for a January rotation much like the current deployment - 800-900 troops split between the two bases at Al Kut and Ad Divaniyah.

15. (C) COMMENT. GOP officials from the president and the PM down have consistently reiterated their readiness to keep Polish troops in Iraq through the end of 2007, with the single exception of Sikorski, who has focused his energies and public support instead on Poland's upcoming deployment of some 1200 troops to Afghanistan, where he served as a British journalist in the 1980s. Nevertheless, in Poland as in other Coalition states there is increasing anxiety and "semi-public" debate among elites in and out of government regarding the future of the mission in Iraq. END COMMENT.
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